

18 VAC 135-50-10. Definitions.

The definitions provided in the Virginia Fair Housing Law, as they may be supplemented herein, shall apply throughout this chapter.

The following words and terms used in this chapter have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Authorized representative" means (i) an attorney licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth, or (ii) a law student appearing in accordance with the third-year student practice rule, or (iii) a non-lawyer under the supervision of an attorney and acting pursuant to Part 6, §1, Rule 1 (UPR 1-101(A)(1)) of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, or (iv) a person who, without compensation, advises a complainant, respondent, or aggrieved person in connection with a complaint, a conciliation conference or proceeding before the board. When a complainant, respondent, or aggrieved person authorizes a person to represent him under subdivision (iv) of this definition, such authority shall be made to the board, in writing or orally in an appearance before the board, and shall be accepted by the representative by sending a written acknowledgement to the board or by the representative's appearance before the board.

"Board" means the Real Estate Board or the Fair Housing Board.

"Broker" or "agent" means any person authorized to perform an action on behalf of another person regarding any matter related to the sale or rental of dwellings, including offers, solicitations or contracts and the administration of matters regarding such offers, solicitations or contracts or any residential real estate-related transactions.

"Department" means the Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation.

"Fair housing administrator" means the individual employed and designated as such by the Director of the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation.

"Fair housing law" means the Virginia Fair Housing Law, Chapter 5.1 (§ 36-96.1 et seq.) of Title 36 of the Code of Virginia, effective July 1, 1991.

"Person in the business of selling or renting dwellings" means any person who (i) within the preceding 12 months, has participated as principal in three or more transactions involving the sale or rental of any dwelling or any interest therein; (ii) within the preceding 12 months, has participated as agent, other than in the sale of his own personal residence, in providing sales or rental facilities or sales or rental services in two or more transactions involving the sale or rental of any dwelling or any interest therein; or (iii) is the owner of any dwelling designed or intended for occupancy by or occupied by, five or more families.

"Receipt of notice" means the day that personal service is completed by handing or delivering a copy of the document to an appropriate person or the date that a document is delivered by certified mail, or three days after the date of the proof of mailing of first class mail.

18 VAC 135-50-20. Purpose.

This chapter governs the exercise of the administrative and enforcement powers granted to and the performance of duties imposed upon the Real Estate Board and the Fair Housing Board by the Virginia Fair Housing Law. In accordance with § 54.1-2344 of the Code of Virginia, the

Real Estate Board is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Fair Housing Law with respect to real estate licensees or their agents or employees who have allegedly violated or violated the Fair Housing Law. The Fair Housing Board is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Fair Housing Law with respect to all others who have allegedly violated or violated the Fair Housing Law.

This chapter provides the board's interpretation of the coverage of the fair housing law regarding discrimination related to the sale or rental of dwellings, the provision of services in connection therewith, and the availability of residential real estate-related transactions.

18 VAC 135-50-220. Interference, coercion or intimidation.

A. This section provides the board's interpretation of the conduct that is unlawful under § 36-96.5 of the Virginia Fair Housing Law.

B. It shall be unlawful to coerce, intimidate, threaten or interfere with any person in the exercise or enjoyment of, or on account of that person having exercised or enjoyed, or on account of that person having aided or encouraged any other person in the exercise or enjoyment of, any right granted or protected by the Virginia Fair Housing Law and these regulations.

~~B.~~ C. Conduct made unlawful under this section includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Coercing a person, either orally, in writing, or by other means, to deny or limit the benefits provided that person in connection with the sale or rental of a dwelling or in connection with a

residential real estate-related transaction because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, elderliness, or national origin.

2. Threatening, intimidating or interfering with persons in their enjoyment of a dwelling because of the race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, elderliness, or national origin of such persons, or of visitors or associates of such persons.

~~2.~~ 3. Threatening an employee or agent with dismissal or an adverse employment action, or taking such adverse employment action, for any effort to assist a person seeking access to the sale or rental of a dwelling or seeking access to any residential real estate-related transaction, because of the race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, elderliness, or national origin of that person or of any person associated with that person.

~~3.~~ 4. Intimidating or threatening any person because that person is engaging in activities designed to make other persons aware of, or encouraging such other persons to exercise, rights granted or protected by this part.

~~4.~~ 5. Retaliating against any person because that person has made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in a proceeding under the fair housing law.

18 VAC 135-50-400. Investigations.

A. Upon the filing of a complaint, the administrator shall investigate the allegations. The purposes of an investigation are:

1. To obtain information concerning the events or transactions that relate to the alleged discriminatory housing practice identified in the complaint.
 2. To document policies or practices of the respondent involved in the alleged discriminatory housing practice raised in the complaint.
 3. To develop factual data necessary for the administrator on behalf of the board to make a determination whether reasonable cause exists to believe that a discriminatory housing practice has occurred or is about to occur, and to take other actions provided under this part.
- B. Based on the authority delegated to the fair housing administrator by the ~~Real Estate Board~~, the administrator may investigate housing practices to determine whether a complaint should be filed. Such an initiation may include using testers and other established practices or procedures.
- I certify that this regulation is full, true and correctly dated.

Karen W. O'Neal, Regulatory Coordinator
Fair Housing Board and Real Estate Board

Date: _____